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**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A method of removing infectious agents from mammalian soft-tissue, said method comprising subjecting said soft-tissue to extraction with a medium comprising a supercritical fluid, thereby removing said infectious agents.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein said infectious agent is a member selected from the group consisting of viruses, bacteria, mycobacteria, fungus, mycoplasma and prions.

3. The method according to claim 2, wherein said virus is a member selected from hepatitis virus, and human immune deficiency virus.

4. The method according to claim 2, wherein said prions are causative agents of spongiform encephelopathy.

5. The method according to claim 1, wherein said fluid is carbon dioxide.

6. The method according to claim 5, wherein the tissue is treated with about 100 to about 500 grams of supercritical carbon dioxide/gram of tissue.

7. The method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the tissue is treated with carbon dioxide for a period determined as a function of carbon dioxide flow rate in order to permit passage of about 100 grams to about 500 grams of supercritical carbon dioxide/gram of tissue.

8. The method according to claim 7, wherein the tissue is treated with carbon dioxide for a period determined as a function of carbon dioxide flow rate in order to permit passage of about 200 grams to about 400 grams of supercritical carbon dioxide/gram of tissue.

9. The method according to claim 6, wherein the supercritical carbon dioxide is applied at a pressure between about  $1 \times 10^7$  Pa and about  $5 \times 10^7$  Pa.

10. The method according to claim 9, wherein the supercritical carbon dioxide is applied at a pressure between about  $2 \times 10^7$  Pa and  $4 \times 10^7$  Pa.

- 1                   **11.**     The method according to claim 6, wherein the supercritical carbon  
2     dioxide is applied at a temperature between about 40 °C. and about 55 °C.
- 1                   **12.**     The method of claim 1, wherein said supercritical fluid is selected from  
2     one or more compounds of the group consisting of fluorocarbons, and alkanes.
- 1                   **13.**     The method of claim 12, wherein said fluorocarbons is selected from  
2     one or more compounds of the group consisting of chlorodifluoromethane and  
3     trifluoromethane.
- 1                   **14.**     The method of claim 12, wherein said alkanes is selected from one or  
2     more compounds of the group consisting of ethylene, propane and ethane.
- 1                   **15.**     The method of claim 12, wherein said critical, supercritical or near  
2     critical fluid is selected from one or more compounds of the group consisting of nitrous  
3     oxide, nitrogen and carbon dioxide.
- 1                   **16.**     The method according to claim 1, wherein said animal material is  
2     derived from an organ.
- 1                   **17.**     The method according to claim 1, wherein said mammalian soft-tissue  
2     is nerve tissue.
- 1                   **18.**     The method according to claim 1, wherein said mammalian soft-tissue  
2     is muscle tissue.
- 1                   **19.**     The method according to claim 1, wherein said mammalian soft tissue  
2     is adipose tissue.
- 1                   **20.**     The method according to claim 1, wherein said mammalian soft-tissue  
2     is glandular tissue.
- 1                   **21.**     A method according to claim 1, wherein said mammalian soft-tissue is  
2     epithelial tissue.
- 1                   **22.**     The method according to claim 1, wherein said mammalian soft-tissue  
2     is endothelial tissue.

1                   **23.**     The method according to claim 1, wherein said mammalian soft tissue  
2     is myocardial tissue.

1                   **24.**     The method according to claim 1, wherein said mammalian soft-tissue  
2     is vascular tissue.

1                   **25.**     The method according to claim 1, wherein said animal material is  
2     lymphatic tissue.

1                   **26.**     The method according to claim 1, wherein said animal material  
2     comprises respiratory tissue.

1                   **27.**     The method according to claim 1, wherein said animal material  
2     comprises digestive tissue.

1                   **28.**     The method according to claim 1, wherein said animal material  
2     comprises sensory tissue.

1                   **29.**     The method according to claim 1, wherein said animal material  
2     comprises urinary tissue.

1                   **30.**     The method according to claim 1, wherein said animal material  
2     comprises reproductive tissue.

1                   **31.**     The method according to claim 1, wherein said method further  
2     comprises adding a modifier or entrainer to said supercritical fluid.

1                   **32.**     The method according to claim 31, wherein said modifier or entrainer  
2     is a surfactant.

1                   **33.**     The method as in claim 31, wherein said modifier or entrainer is water.

1                   **34.**     The method according to claim 31, wherein said modifier or entrainer  
2     is an alcohol.

1                   **35.**     The method according to claim 34, wherein said alcohol is ethanol.

1                   **36.**     The method according to claim 34, wherein said alcohol is n-propanol.

1                   **37.**    The method according to claim **31**, wherein said modifier or entrainer  
2    is a ketone.

1                   **38.**    A method as in claim **37**, wherein said ketone is acetone.

1                   **39.**    A method of treating a mammalian soft tissue with a chemical agent,  
2    said method comprising contacting said tissue with a solution of said chemical agent in a  
3    supercritical fluid.

1                   **40.**    The method according to claim **39**, wherein said chemical agent is a  
2    fixing agent.

1                   **41.**    The method according to claim **40**, wherein said fixing agent is an  
2    aldehyde.

1                   **42.**    The method according to claim **41**, wherein said aldehyde is  
2    glutaraldehyde.

1                   **43.**    A method for removing a chemical agent from a tissue following  
2    treatment of said tissue with said chemical agent, said method comprising contacting said  
3    tissue with a supercritical fluid under conditions that remove said chemical agent from said  
4    tissue.

1                   **44.**    The method according to claim **1**, wherein said infectious agent is  
2    selected from the group consisting of nucleic acids, lipids, proteins, and polysaccharides.